

# International boxer was gentle giant outside the ring

## TREVOR KERR

**G**ENTLE giant Trevor Kerr was a champion in the ring and an inspiration to budding young boxers outside it.

The father of two was an Irish international, once fighting in Madison Square Garden, as well the holder of a Northern Ireland title after turning pro.

One of 10 children from Cooneen outside Fivemiletown, he had followed his eldest brother Norman into boxing alongside his younger brother Dessie.

As a teenager he joined up with legendary coach Gerry Storey at the Holy Family club in north Belfast, the cross-community cradle of some of Ireland's greatest ever fighters.

Trevor's dedication was remarkable – every Monday, Wednesday and Friday as well as Sunday morning he made the gruelling journey from Fivemiletown on 1960s roads to learn his trade.

His reward was success at provincial and national level and an international vest, with a memorable tour of the US seeing him box in New York's Madison Square Garden, in Pittsburgh and in West Orange, New Jersey.

"Trevor was a great club man – every time you came down his car would be there," Mr Storey said.

"He was a gentle giant, always smiling, and a pleasure to work with."

Trevor turned professional in 1977 and had fights in the leisure centre in Enniskillen, in Belfast and England.

The highlight was a victory over Mick Fellingham to claim the Northern Ireland light heavyweight title. He also enjoyed two wins against John Breen.

He had an all-action 'Rocky' style, not afraid to take a few hits to get his own big shot away, and outside the ring he put the same whole-hearted effort into his work as a builder.

Among those to employ him was John Williamson, proprietor of the Valley Hotel in Fivemiletown and president of the



### ■ CHAMPION:

Trevor Kerr in action in the ring and, below, Trevor Kerr with John Williamson, president of the British Boxing Board of Control



British Boxing Board of Control, who described him as an "absolute gentleman".

"He was a lovely, very good-natured man. He must have had a pocket full of pound coins wherever he went because he was always giving them out to children," he said.

"Trevor ran a boxing club for youngsters at his own house for years and then set up Cooneen amateur boxing club.

"There was never any belt for the Northern Ireland title so when Trevor was sick the hotel decided to sponsor one and we were very happy to present it to him."

Trevor Kerr died aged 68 on November 12. He is survived by his wife of more than 40 years, Wilma, his daughters Rushelle and Anita and three grandchildren.